

GENERAL ORDERS, }
No. 308.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, September 12, 1863.

The Medical Inspector General has, under direction of the Surgeon General, the supervision of all that relates to the sanitary condition of the Army, whether in transports, quarters, or camps; the hygiene, police, discipline, and efficiency of field and general hospitals; and the assignment of duties to Medical Inspectors.

Medical Inspectors are charged with the duty of inspecting the sanitary condition of transports, quarters, and camps of field and general hospitals, and will report to the Medical Inspector General all circumstances relating to the sanitary condition and wants of troops and of hospitals, and to the skill, efficiency, and conduct of the officers and attendants connected with the Medical Department. They are required to see that all regulations for protecting the health of troops, and for the careful treatment of and attendance upon the sick and wounded, are duly observed.

They will carefully examine into the quantity, quality, and condition of medical and hospital supplies, the correctness of all medical, sanitary, statistical, military, and property records and accounts pertaining to the Medical Department, and the punctuality with which reports and returns, required by Regulations, have been forwarded to the Surgeon General.

They will ascertain the amount of disease and mortality among the troops, inquire into the causes, and the steps that may have been taken for its prevention or mitigation, indicating, verbally or in writing, to the medical officers such additional measures or precautions as may be requisite. When sanitary reforms, requiring the sanction and co-operation of military authority, are urgently demanded, they will report at once, in writing, to the officer commanding Corps, Department, or Division, the circumstances and necessities of the case, and the measures considered advisable for their relief, forwarding a duplicate of such reports to the Medical Inspector General.

They will instruct and direct the medical officers in charge as to the proper measures to be adopted for the correction of errors and abuses, and, in all cases of conflict of views, authority, or instructions, with

those of Medical Directors, will report the circumstances fully and promptly to the Medical Inspector General for the Surgeon General's orders.

Upon or near the beginning of each month, Medical Inspectors will make minute and thorough inspections of hospitals, barracks, camps, transports, &c., &c., within the districts to which they are assigned, in conformity with these instructions, and the forms for inspection reports furnished them.

Monthly inspection reports, in addition to remarks under the several heads, will also convey the fullest information in regard to the medical and surgical treatment adopted; the advantages or disadvantages of location, construction, general arrangement and administration of hospitals, camps, barracks; the necessity for improvement, alteration, or repair, with such recommendations as will most certainly conduce to the health and comfort of the troops, and the proper care and treatment of the sick and wounded. When alterations, improvements, or repairs, requiring the action of Heads of Bureaus, are considered essential, special reports, accompanied by plans and approximate estimates of quantities or cost, will be made.

Medical Inspectors will make themselves fully conversant with the regulations of the Subsistence Department in all that relates to issues to hospitals, whether general, field, division, or regimental, and will satisfy themselves, by rigid examination of accounts and expenditures, that the fund accruing from retained rations is judiciously applied, and not diverted from its proper purposes through the ignorance or inattention of medical officers, giving such information and instruction on this subject as may be required. They will also give close attention to the supervision of cooking by the medical officer, whose duty it is, under the act of Congress of March 3, 1863, and General Orders, No. 247, of 1863, to "submit his suggestions for improving the cooking, in writing, to the commanding officer," and to accompany him in frequent inspections of the kitchens and messes.

They will exercise sound discrimination in reporting "an officer of the Medical Corps as disqualified, by age or otherwise, for promotion to a higher grade, or unfitted for the performance of his professional duties," and be prepared to submit evidence of its correctness to the Medical Board, by whom the charge will be investigated.

Medical Inspectors are also charged with the duty of designating, to

the surgeon in charge of general hospitals and convalescent camps, all soldiers who are in their opinion fit subjects for discharge on surgeons' certificate of disability, or sufficiently recovered to be able for duty. In all such cases they will direct the surgeon to discharge from service, in accordance with existing orders and regulations, or return to duty those so designated.

Official communications to the Medical Inspector General will be directed to the Surgeon General, U. S. A., and plainly addressed on the left-hand lower corner of envelope "For the Medical Inspector General," the name and title of the writer being *written* under the words "Official Business."

It is expected that all commanding officers will afford every facility to Medical Inspectors in the execution of their important duties, giving such orders as may be necessary to carry into effect their suggestions and recommendations; and it is enjoined upon all medical officers, and others connected with the Medical Department of the United States Army, to yield prompt compliance with the instructions they may receive from Medical Inspectors on duty in the Army, Department, or District in which they are serving, on all matters relating to the sanitary condition of the troops, and of the hygiene, police, discipline, and efficiency of hospitals.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

E. D. TOWNSEND,
Assistant Adjutant General.

